

Naked Trees

Isaiah 6:13 **But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return,** and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, **whose substance is in them,** when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.

The other day I was meditating on this verse and pondering its meaning when their flashed into my mind an amazing connection and I saw that this was yet another description of the 144,000 and the faithful remnant.

Notice we are shown a picture here of a time when ALL the trees are casting their leaves. What are we told that the leaves represent?

“The cursing of the fig tree was an acted parable. **That barren tree, flaunting its pretentious foliage in the very face of Christ,** was a symbol of the Jewish nation. The Saviour desired to make plain to His disciples the cause and the certainty of Israel's doom. For this purpose He invested the tree with moral qualities, and made it the expositor of divine truth. The Jews stood forth distinct from all other nations, **professing allegiance to God.** They had been specially favored by Him, and **they laid claim to righteousness above every other people.** But they were corrupted by the love of the world and the greed of gain. They boasted of their knowledge, but they were ignorant of the requirements of God, **and were full of hypocrisy.** Like the barren tree, they spread their pretentious branches aloft, luxuriant in appearance, and beautiful to the eye, **but they yielded "nothing but leaves."** DA 583.

The leaves are the outward pretensions; but if something is not there besides just leaves; the tree is not accepted of God. Notice:

Mark 11:14 “And Jesus answered and said unto it, **No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever.** And his disciples heard it.”

Mark 11:20 “And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw **the fig tree dried up from the roots.**”

In spite of is luxuriant profession and show, the barren tree was cursed—why? Because it gave a pretention but bore no fruit.

Jude 1:12, 13 “These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; **trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;** Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, **to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.**”

There is coming a time when ALL pretention will be stripped away from ALL the trees. The time that the two classes of the Wise and Foolish Virgins are made visible; a time when the Wicked stand out in contrast to the Wise; the Tares in contrast to the Wheat; when the Sheep and Goats are displayed to the eyes of all.

Look again at our text:

Isaiah 6:13 **But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return,** and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, **whose substance is in them,** when they cast their leaves: so **the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.**

In the trial that is coming, all leaves of profession are stripped off—ALL the trees stand bare BUT some of them are different. Even though they, too, are stripped of leaves—they are full of fruit. Again we see two classes: Naked trees, and trees, that while also being tried by the storm—are found to be full of fruit. Their ‘substance’ is in them. They have something more to show to the world and to God than just naked limbs.

Then there flashed into my mind another place where this thought is put forth:

Revelation 16:15 “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, **lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.**”

Again we see that a time is close at hand that will try men’s souls; a time that will tear off the leaves from all professing trees:

“The time is not far distant when the test will come to every soul. The mark of the beast will be urged upon us. **Those who have step by step yielded to worldly demands and conformed to worldly customs will not find it a hard matter to yield to the powers that be, rather than subject themselves to derision, insult, threatened imprisonment, and death.** The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. **True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness.** Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ’s righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness.

“When trees without fruit are cut down as cumberers of the ground, when **multitudes of false brethren are distinguished from the true, then the hidden ones will be revealed to view,** and with hosannas range under the banner of Christ. Those who have been timid and self-distrustful will declare themselves openly for Christ and His truth. The most weak and hesitating in the church will be as David--willing to do and dare. The deeper the night for God’s people, the more brilliant the stars. Satan will sorely harass the faithful; but, in the name of Jesus, they will come off more than conquerors. Then

will the church of Christ appear "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." 5T 81.

So we see another contrast Naked Trees and Trees that while they are stripped by the winds of trial and strife, only show their fruited boughs more clearly to all: Naked vs. fruited trees. **"When they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof."** May the 'Holy Seed' be in each of us is my prayer!

Here are more references about Fruit and Barren Trees:

"Gorgeous apparel, fine singing, and instrumental music in the church do not call forth the songs of the angel choir. **In the sight of God these things are like the branches of the unfruitful fig tree which bore nothing but pretentious leaves. Christ looks for fruit,** for principles of goodness and sympathy and love. These are the principles of heaven, and when they are revealed in the lives of human beings, we may know that Christ is formed within, the hope and glory. A congregation may be the poorest in the land, without music or outward show, but if it possesses these principles, the members can sing, for the joy of Christ is in their souls, and this they can offer as a sweet oblation to God." Manuscript 123, 1899.

"These irreligious, irresponsible formalists may **stand forth before the world in pretentious leaves, while, like the barren fig-tree they are wholly destitute of that which alone our Saviour values,**--fruit to His glory. The work wrought on the heart by the grace of God, they know nothing about." FE 50.1

"**Jesus saw his church, like the barren fig-tree, covered with pretentious leaves, yet destitute of precious fruit.** There was a boastful observance of the forms of religion, while the spirit of true humility, penitence, and faith--which alone could render the service acceptable to God--was lacking. Instead of the graces of the Spirit, there were manifested pride, formalism, vainglory, selfishness, oppression. **A backsliding church closed their eyes to the signs of the times. God did not forsake them, or suffer his faithfulness to fail; but they departed from him, and separated themselves from his love.** As they refused to comply with the conditions, his promises were not fulfilled to them." GC88 315.

"The fig tree was covered with promising, pretentious leaves, but was entirely destitute of fruit. **It represented impenitent Israel, who had failed to do the work of God's appointment. And not only does this lesson apply to the Jews, but in its terrible significance it reaches to every age, warning each soul of the sure result of profession without practice.** Let professing Christians inquire into the meaning of the curse pronounced upon the fig tree. The tree was full of promise, but investigation revealed its barrenness. It bore no fruit; and because of this defect, words were spoken that caused it almost immediately to wither away." RH, February 13, 1900 par. 7